

When Whiskers Fell Before the Razor's Onslaught



NATHAN MERRIAM

ARNOLD C. von W. KOENIG

CHARLES T. KOUNTZE

DR. C. C. ALLISON

F. D. WEAD

MORITZ MEYER

THOMAS H. McCAGUE

DOANE POWELL

JUDGE GEORGE A. DAY

O. C. REDICK

JOHN C. WHARTON

IRVING BAXTER

SUCH a butchery of whiskers of all descriptions as has been going on in Omaha during the last ten to fifteen years is rivaled in cruelty only by the ruthlessness of Timur when he "built the ghastly tower of 80,000 human skulls." Cold-blooded as it was, it was approved and endorsed even by the wives of those engaged in the slaughter. Faces were disfigured in the massacre, yet must it be said, not a few faces were also improved by the seething wave of cut and slash that rushed in upon the men of beards.

Natural enough was it that this great party of "cut and slashers" should immediately break, as all parties do at one time or another, into two factions, the "radicals" and the "conservatives." The "radicals" or "extremists" swung to the apellation of the pendulum's course, and decided every stubble, however harmless, must go. Not a trace could they bear upon their faces. Then was there a harvest for the barbers. This wing of the party did the barbers encourage, and had campaign contributions been in vogue at the time the barbers' union would have been a heavy contributor to the "radical" faction. But there were the "conservatives," some of whom simply took off the grass with a lawnmower once in two weeks, simply nipping off the anarls, as it were, and leaving a close crop of stubble run-

ning to the point on the chin. Others took off only the beard and left the heavy mop over the upper lip. All resulted in the disguising of the men who had long been known by the facial decorations they wore. Distressing enough was the rank revolution that tore good men away from the custom of their fathers and left strong men with the smooth face of a girl. Indeed, "What thinks Bootes of them as he leads his hunting dogs over the zenith in their leash of sidereal fire?"

Had Charles E. Hughes of New York slipped into the White House when he was sliding that way a few years ago, instead of being switched off and getting stranded on the bench of the United States supreme court, no doubt Fred D. Wead of the Wead Real Estate company would still be wearing that fine, dark, anarls roll around his chin from ear to ear. For Wead looked more like Justice Hughes than Hughes himself. One could almost feel the fire of the New York reformer's tongue when he looked into the face of Mr. Wead. But what credit is there in looking like a mere justice of the supreme court? No one hears of a justice of the supreme court unless there is a movement to recall him. So Wead sought out the barber of the strongest arm and in forty minutes the magnificent beard was no more. Today he wears only the short-cropped mustache. It is a good one, however, and the absence of the beard shows off his strong chin to such advantage that it is doubtful whether Mr. Wead will ever return to the Hughes type of chin fringes.

The thick, dark mat that Thomas H. McCague

of the McCague Investment company used to wear in the good old days when such crops were in vogue would have done credit to the great Prof. "Herr Teufelsdröckh," immortalized by Thomas Carlyle. It was thick, magnificent, curled, snarled, bearish, giving the features of the man in their entirety a solemn, almost frowning aspect. Then came the period of reform in beard growing, when the "radicals" scraped them clean and the more "conservative" heads were content to crop them off. McCague allied himself with the "conservatives." He did not wish to be thus suddenly and completely disguised, although he was swept along to a certain extent by the wave of reform in beard growing. The weapon of the "radicals" was the razor. That of the "conservatives" was anything from sheep shears to a hoe. McCague got in his work with the lawnmower and the result is that he now has a neatly tailored chin running to something of a vandyke point.

Nathan Merriam of the Merriam Milling company used to carry a sweeping dignity on either side of his chin. He took all that off and wore a mustache for a time, and then becoming dissatisfied with that, mowed it clean. "I used to wear a fine bunch on either side," says Mr. Merriam, "but they were getting a little gray and I had to take them off. We have to keep young, you know."

A. C. Koenig was overcome with remorse when he got as far as the chin in the ruthless work of destroying his crop of whiskers, so he just dropped off there and left a goatee on which he still prides himself. It is almost a Buffalo Bill effect, but as

Mr. Koenig has never been known to have any wild west aspirations, it is unfair to charge him with having plagiarized the cut.

Dr. C. C. Allison periodically fluctuates in his craving for whiskers or no whiskers. When he had not been out of college as long as he has now he used to wear his beard trimmed to a delicate "doctorial" point. In after years he cared less about this particular nicety and for a time whipped the chin clean. Later he again allowed the crop to get a start, until his friends say they cannot tell from week to week whether he is a bearded man or a smooth-shaven.

Not a little youth has been imparted to the face of Irving F. Baxter by the removal of his mustache. While the removal of a mustache gives to some faces a kind of cold, military severity, the face of Mr. Baxter has taken on a gentler, kindlier tone.

O. C. Redick has removed what used to be a creditable growth on the upper lip. He has found it more satisfactory. The change has given him

youth and that is a quality despised by no man.

District Judge George A. Day has just recently joined the ranks of the "radicals" on the subject of whiskers. The result is that "where once the harvest smiled," now lies a barren stubble field. It is not always easy for the man newly converted to the ranks of the shaven to remember to get his shavvy regularly. So when he forgets the stubbles grow rapidly, but he is learning, he is learning.

John C. Wharton, postmaster of Omaha, has entirely given up all facial decorations. A fine, heavy mustache used to hide his upper lip, but he found his lip looked better and worked better in his oratorical outbursts than did a mustache, so off came the mustache.

The beard of Charles T. Kountze of Kountze Bros. never was much of a success. If it had been an oats field the farmer would have pronounced it a "poor stand." He would have plowed it under and planted corn in its stead.